Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4861

CONFIDENTIAL ALGIERS 1755

NODIS

CORRECTED COPY-TEXT--REF ADDED

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS AMEMBASSY RABAT

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2 TAGS: PFOR, MO, AG

SUBJECT: MOROCCAN-ALGERIAN PROPAGANDA ATTACKS

REF: RABAT 3700

1. ALGERIAN-MOROCCAN PROPAGANDA EXCHANGES MENTIONED REFTEL ARE, OF COURSE, ONLY A SURFACE MANIFESTATION OF DEEP-SEATED ANTAGONISM WHICH HAS COME TO A HEAD OVER SAHARA PROBLEM. WE DOUBT VERY MUCH THAT THERE WILL BE ANY ABATEMENT OF THOSE EXCHANGES UNTIL AND UNLESS THERE IS SOME PROGRESS ON SOLUTION OF THE BASIC DISPUTE. THE PROSPECTS FOR SUCH A SOLUTION ARE NOT BRIGHT AT PRESENT, PARTICULARLY GIVEN RECENT GAINS, MILITARY AND POLITICAL, MADE BY ALGERIANS AND POLISARIO.

2. GIVEN THESE REALITIES, WE BELIEVE THERE IS LITTLE LIKE-LIHOOD EITHER MOROCCANS OR ALGERIANS WOULD CALL OFF PRESS EXCHANGES, EVEN IF THEY COMMITTED THEMSELVES TO DO SO TO SENATOR PERCY. WE BELIEVE HOWEVER, THAT VISIT HERE BY HIM TO DISCUSS SAHARA WOULD BE USEFUL AND WOULD WELCOME IT. WE DO NOT KNOW WHETHER HE WOULD GET TO SEE BOUTEFLIKA, GIVEN LATTER'S CHURLISH RECORD WITH VISITORS, BUT ARE CONFIDENT WE COULD GET HIM IN TO SEE BOUMEDIENE. VISIT WOULD BE TAKEN AS SIGN OF POSITIVE INTEREST ON OUR PART, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND FACT THAT PERCY WOULD BE ABLE TO LISTEN WITHOUT HAVING TO MAKE AUTHORITATIVE RESPONSE ON BEHALF OF USG WOULD MAKE CONVERSATION CONSIDERABLE EASIER.

3. WE WOULD HAVE TO REALIZE, HOWEVER, THAT ALGERIANS (AND OTHERS) LIKELY INTERPRET CONVERSATION ON SAHARA INITIATED BY AN AMERICAN SENATOR AS A MEDIATION EFFORT, EVEN THOUGH SENATOR CAME IN PRIVATE CAPACITY, AND MIGHT EXPECT FOLLOW-UP ON OUR PART. PARKER

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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